

## 42 THE CASTAWAYS OF THE FLAG

vain were in the boat already! The women had been lowered down a few minutes before the prisoners had left the spar-deck. They were waiting in mortal terror, not knowing whether their companions were to be cast adrift with them.

It seemed to them that to be reunited was the greatest grace that Heaven could have bestowed on them.

And yet what peril menaced them aboard this boat! Only four bags of biscuit and salt meat had been flung into it, with three casks of fresh water, a few cooking utensils, and a bundle of clothes and blankets taken at random from the cabins—a meagre supply at best.

But they were together! Death alone could separate them henceforward.

They were not given much time to reflect. In a few moments,, with the freshening wind, the *Flag* would be several miles away.

The boatswain had taken his place at the tiller, and Fritz and Frank theirs at the foot of the mast, ready to hoist the sail directly the boat should be free from the shelter of the ship.

Captain Gould had been laid down under the forward deck. Jenny was ministering to him where

he lay stretched out on the blankets,  
for he was  
unable to stand,

On the *Flag* the sailors were leaning  
over the  
nettings, looking on in silence. Not  
one of them